
From: Marisa Walls [marisawalls@sbcglobal.net]

Sent: Wednesday, March 07, 2012 11:00 PM

To: AppropriationTestimony

Subject: Opposition to HB 5016 and the idea of alternative merger/consolidation into OGA

I am the mother of an individual living with a mental illness. I serve on the PAIMI - Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness council.

In addition to my volunteer commitment as an advisory council member on PAIMI,

I volunteer my efforts and serve my community as follows:

Avon Town Representative for the North Central Regional Mental Health Board to ensure that every CT citizen is receiving mental health services and resources.

NAMI CT Executive Board of Director (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

NAMI Farmington Valley Board of Director

NAMI Family to Family Education Facilitator to help our community families and friends understand their loved one's mental illness.

NAMI Basics Education Facilitator to help our primary caregivers in our communities who have children/adolescents afflicted with mental health behavioral issues/mental illness.

NAMI Family Support facilitator to help our community families through the challenges, stress, chaos, and crisis they face each day while living with their loved one's mental illness. I give generously of my time to our CT families, friends and primary caregivers in our communities who face the challenges of their loved one's mental illness!

"Mental illness impacts the lives of at least one in four adults and one in 10 children--or 60 million Americans"

Combining P&A (PAIMI) with CHO or another CT government agency will save the state of CT money (...smile...)!

Please furnish me with a ballpark figure of how much MONEY will be saved in our state? Then furnish me with how many LIVES will be saved in our state? You are intelligent legislators and committee members and can figure the math, right? Therefore, I challenge you to tell me how much of this MONEY saved with the proposed merger is equivalent to ONE LIFE? A life of an individual living with a mental illness in CT.

We have a plethora of issues in our State of CT alone concerning individuals living with a mental illness - stigma, discrimination, budget issues, not enough housing, inadequate medical insurance, homelessness, and the laundry list goes on and on and on - and what really bothers me is this:

The state of CT is now making a decision to take the very thing which allows each and everyone of us to acknowledge the individual living with a mental illness as a human being first and foremost,
their rights to protection!!!

How much money is the LIFE of one individual living with a mental illness worth? Will the money saved with HB 5016 suffice?

Thank you for opposing HB 5016 - bad choice all around!

Marisa Walls

Mom of a son with a mental illness!

3/12/2012